

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress and a grateful Nation, my wife Vicki and I extend our deepest appreciation of Colonel Thompson for his many years of dedicated service. There is no question that the Air Force, Department of Defense, and the United States benefitted greatly from Colonel Thompson's visionary leadership, planning, and foresight, and we wish him and his wife, Pam, the very best.

SANFORD HIGH SCHOOL MEN'S
BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Sanford High School men's basketball team and their coach, Rhett Larsen. Sanford's Indians claimed their sixth Class 2A state basketball title, with their previous titles coming in 1950, 1951, 1978, 1996, and 2006.

Sanford finished the season with a remarkable 26–1 record, capping it off with a championship win over Akron, 55–51 at the Colorado State University-Pueblo Massari Arena. The team made 17 free throws in the fourth quarter, making nine free throws in the final two minutes to clinch the victory.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Sanford's basketball team and their coach, Rhett Larsen. Under Coach Laresn's expert guidance, I have no doubt that Sanford will win many more state titles. I look forward to this group of young men's future successes on and off the basketball court.

HONORING PETER WIRS

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Peter Wirs, a friend and a neighbor, who will soon become the first diabetic and oldest individual to step into an international freestyle wrestling mat at this year's USA Wrestling's National Open, taking place in Las Vegas on April 17. Peter Wirs currently serves as the 59th Republican Ward Leader in Philadelphia.

But despite what Peter has accomplished, diabetes continues to be an epidemic. One in 12 Americans has diabetes, and an additional one in 3 Americans is at risk for developing the disease. Every 17 seconds, another individual is diagnosed with diabetes. Shockingly, this disease kills more Americans every year than breast cancer and AIDS combined. The American Diabetes Association's latest research estimates the total costs of diagnosed diabetes have risen to \$245 billion in 2012 from \$174 billion in 2007, when the cost was last examined, representing a 41 percent over a five-year period. Diabetes costs severely impact American productivity, let alone billions in healthcare costs.

Pete Wirs could have given up ten years ago. When I first met Pete Wirs he weighed 250 lbs. Today, he weighs 180 lbs. He exercises at 5:30 in the morning every day, fol-

lowed by drills and wrestling holds and moves practice every night after work at the Pennsylvania Wrestling Club headquarters, located in my District.

Mr. Speaker, we don't know whether Leader Wirs will win or lose his first match. But no matter what the final score ends up being, Pete Wirs will have scored a moral victory by simply stepping onto the mat, by getting his diabetes under control, and by proving to all of us that physical fitness is not a diet or a fad, but a life-long commitment to healthy eating, continuous exercise, and sports activity.

Mr. Speaker, Pete Wirs remains an inspiration to all diabetics and indeed to all of us who should be exercising and participating in sports and recreation. I join my colleague, Congressman JIM JORDAN, in congratulating Leader Wirs, and all of his fellow team members, coaches and boosters in what is sure to be a sports event for the history books.

IN MEMORY OF BERNADINO CRUZ,
JR., AND HIS PASSION FOR EDU-
CATION, MUSIC, AND THE
SOUTHWEST DETROIT COMMU-
NITY

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and work of Bernadino Cruz, Jr., an educator, a musician and a community activist in Southwest Detroit.

As an educator, Mr. Cruz shared his love of music and the learning process with his students as a music teacher at Burt Elementary and then at Cesar Chavez Academy. In each instance, he took his love of music and focused that passion into connecting his students with the importance of their education. At Burt Elementary, Mr. Cruz not only directly tied the music department programming into the school's curriculum, but also took the initiative to expand the array of programming available to students by establishing a concert choir. At Cesar Chavez, Mr. Cruz continued his track record of dedication to his students by establishing an instrumental music program and a touring bilingual concert choir. As an honor and testament to the remarkable impact Mr. Cruz made on the students at Cesar Chavez, the new media center at its high school will be dedicated to him.

After more than six years as a teacher, Mr. Cruz stepped into a new educational role as Assistant Principal at the Hope of Detroit Academy. In this position, he continued his commitment to engage his students in the educational process. His responsibilities included overseeing the entire school curriculum, management of day-to-day operations and management of student body behavior.

Furthermore, Mr. Cruz's passion for learning did not stop with his students—it is a value that he practiced in his own life as he continued to seek more knowledge in the field of education. Following his Bachelor of Arts in Music from Wayne State University, Mr. Cruz went on to receive additional certifications in education and education administration from Wayne State and Marygrove College in Detroit. With each new skill he developed, Mr. Cruz furthered his mission to empower his students with a quality education.

As a musician, Mr. Cruz shared his passion for music with the Southwest Detroit community in many ways. In addition to his role as a music teacher in the field of education, Mr. Cruz served as a music teacher at the Most Holy Redeemer Church and used his musical talents to support many causes focused on strengthening the Southwest Detroit community. Working together with his brother Mauro, Mr. Cruz also sought to build bridges of cultural understanding by taking traditional Latin music and incorporating new rhythms and styles that helped youth better connect to both their identity and heritage.

Mr. Speaker, leaders, educators and artists, like Mr. Bernadino Cruz, Jr., are so important to ensuring the success of the communities we represent. Mr. Cruz showed a passion and dedication for education, music and the Southwest Detroit community that have inspired so many to make a difference in their community. I join the Southwest Detroit community, and all whose lives have been influenced by Mr. Cruz and his enthusiasm, in the sadness that is felt for his loss. However, I know that his family can take comfort in the incredible difference he has made in the lives of so many people, and the inspiration his legacy will continue to instill in future generations.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF LEONARD
WASSERMAN

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Leonard J. Wasserman of Oregon, Ohio, who passed from this life on Monday, March 10, 2014. Len Wasserman was an indefatigable and socially minded leader on many fronts, dedicating his life to the service of his country and his local community.

After graduating from Olney High School in 1944, Len served as a Sergeant in the U.S. Army during WWII. Following his service, he returned to Oregon, Ohio, to work as an engineer for Pure-Union oil, then as a chief engineer for Little Sisters of the Poor. In addition to his work as an engineer, he also enjoyed farming and continued pursuing this passion until his retirement in 2000.

In the city of Oregon, he has made an immeasurable impact through his active role in the community. He served the city in various capacities, ranging from Councilman, Mayor, member of T.M.O.C.O.G., and past chairman of the Safety Commission and the Oregon Growth Commission. Len also remained politically active throughout his life, through his involvement in the Oregon Democratic Club. He served as past president and was a lifetime member 45+ years precinct committeeman. He was also a life member of the St. Ignatius Church, serving the church in a variety of roles. Len was a member and past president of the Holy Name Society, church lector, Eucharistic minister, member and past president of St. Vincent DePaul Society, church councilman, usher, and past president of the church credit union. In addition to his involvement with the church, Len was also a member of the Christ Dunberger American Legion Post 537, where he served as chaplain and member of the color guard, V.F.W. 9816, life member of O.C.A.W. 346, Old News Boys, Eagles